

A
REVIEW
OF THE
STATE
OF THE
BRITISH NATION.

Tuesday, July 5. 1709.

I Have dwelt a long while upon the Numbers of People being the Subject of Commerce, and have apply'd the Argument to the Affair before us, of the poor *Palatine* Refugees now come over. I propos'd in my last how you may plant them; I have prov'd, that so planted, the necessary Works, which their own Numbers will employ, will take up all their Hands, so that they need not take up one Day of the Labour of our Poor; and that useless Clamour, of their coming to take the Bread out of our Mouths, will fall to the Ground.

If 30 Families of Husbandmen and farming People are planted in each Place, with Lands to manage under them, the necessary Trades, that these will require for

their Necessity and their Convenience, will maintain all the rest. They must have a Wheel-wright to make and mend their Carts, Waggon, Ploughs, Barrows, Tools, &c. A Smith to shoe their Horses, and make the Iron-Work for their Ploughs, Carts, &c. A Collar-maker for their Harness, Ropes, Saddles, Bridles, &c. and the like—— These Families must have Food, and for that Purpose at least one Butcher, one Malster, one Baker, one Miller, &c. They must all have Clothes, and for that Purpose Shoe-makers, Taylors, Flax-dressers, Wool-combers, Weavers, Hatters, Glovers, and the like; and thus the Farmer produces Corn and Cattle from the Land; the Artificers and Manufacturers supply

supply them with such Necessaries, as they cannot subsist without—— Thus planting a Few makes Way for a great Many; and the Husbandry being the Foundation, the Artificers, Labourers, and Manufacturers are employ'd among themselves—And our Poor lose not one Days Work—— Mean while *Britain* gains on all Hands, her Wool is still the more employ'd—— The Earth is made to produce more, and that Produce remains among us; more Hands are employ'd, and there are Hands ready both to encrease our Wealth, and to defend it when they have done.

It is hard for me, after making this so clear, to tell you, that you will not hear it.—That tho' your Reason submits to it, yet your Humour will oppose it; for we must always allow, the vast Distance between Reason and Humour—lies only in this Trifle, That one acts with their Eyes open, the other with their Eyes shut; one sees in the dark, the other sees darkly in the Light; and who can answer for this Distraction?—— That it is so, is but too evident—— We will not give up our Common, even tho' in many Places 'tis of no Manner of Use—How many Instances may we give, where this very Clamour of enclosing the Common has rais'd Tumults and Rabbles?—— Even in *New Forrest*; where some Land was enclos'd by Authority of Parliament, in order to preserve the Timber, a Thing too much wanted in *England*—— Yet the miserable, unsatisfy'd Rabble rose and tore down the Fences, destroy'd the Enclosure, and leaves it all open.

All our Histories mention *William* the Conqueror, as committing a horrid Waste in depopulating the Country, destroying 30 Churches, and a great many Villages, driving the Inhabitants from their Houses, to lay this Tract of Land open into a Forrest, a Habitation for wild Beasts, and restoring primitive Desolation; and without doubt it was a most barbarous Usage of them. But how does the Change of Circumstances change Humours, and that which is criminal to day, becomes just to morrow? Here the Table turns; *William* the Conqueror is reproach'd with depopulating the Country, and as if it had been a

Thing provoking to GOD, our Histories boast of the Retribution, *Vir.* How his Son was shot there with an Arrow, and slain, which, they say, was a manifest Proof of God's Displeasure, and Justice in punishing. Now, here is an Opportunity to reflect on People and Towns to this vast Wilderness, and to people, cultivate, and improve the Land as it was before; and now this is become as great a Crime as the other. How, Gentlemen, can it be a Crime to make Forrests, and a Crime to unmake them too? This is a strange Inconsistency, and indeed it must be such Shifts as these, that can alone support such an Absurdity.

But the Poor—That indeed is the Cry—But, I tell you, 'tis a National Fraud—— The Commons and open Grounds in *England* were, originally indeed, left free to the Poor, and were design'd for their Support; but 'tis the Rich enjoy them, the rest is all Sham and Outside. *A. perhaps Lord of the Mannor, lets B. a Farm—A. demands 100 l. a Year for it, B. bids 80 l. a Year, and says 'tis enough; for, Master, says B. there is but so much Land, you know; so much Arable, so much Pasture, so much Meadow—— Ay, but, says A. that is not all, Farmer B. for by Vertue of this Farm, you have Right of the Common in the whole Mannor; you have Liberty to put 20 Cows or Horses upon the Town-Field, as soon as the Corn is off; you have 200 Sheep allow'd you upon the Down, Room for your Horses to run in the great Meadow, and you have Liberty to feed so and so upon THE FORREST. These are great Advantages, and deserve a Consideration; besides you have Liberty to cut Wood for Fuel upon the Forrest—— This makes the Farmer comply with the Rent, the Common is annex'd to the Farm; but the Landlord gets the Rent even of this Commonage—— This is one of the many Ways we cheat our selves; for here the Landlord really makes 20 l. a Year of the Common; and we talk of the Poor having the Benefit of the Common; the Thing's a Cheat—— There's not a Farm in *England*, if there be any Right of Common or Herbage on the Forrests belongs to it, but the Landlord gets the more Rent for*

for it— If any Poor get by the Common, it is the poor Cottager; and GOD knows, they are so few, and their Profits so small, that they are easily satisfy'd by such equivalent Advantages as may be given another Way.

This is made clear beyond the Power of Contradiction, by an Observation, which will be found very just; viz. That when any Attempt is made to enclose Wastes or Forrests, it is not the poor Cottager that rabbles the Lord of the Mannor, it is the Tenants of the Lordship; and the Reason is just, because the Common has been always an Appendix to the Farm, and the Rent is paid accordingly.

This, rightly stated, would remove all possible Objection against improving and enclosing Forrests and Wastes— And settling

People upon them; for a Court of Claims being erected, with Power of making Satisfaction for those Rights, would end it all, by granting Equivalents in appropriating Land; and annexing such Land to the Farms, that claim in Lieu of the Wastes and Herbage, they before had a Right to— And this you have a great many Precedents for, particularly in *New Park* near *Richmond* in *Surry*, and in *Enfield Chase* in *Middlesex* and *Hartfordshire*, which were severally enclos'd, and the Chase lett into Farms, and improv'd, in the late Wars; tho' it was thought fit to lay it open again after the Restoration, principally because the Crown had not the Rent; a Reason that will always prevail among us, whatever it does in other Parts of the World.

MISCELLANEA.

OF the Campaign, we have now very little to say— The Confederate Armies are before *Tournay*; all the World knows, that it is a Town made as strong, as Art and Hands can make a Place to be— The Fortifications are great and in good Condition, and the Cittadel is the most perfect, the finest and compleatest Fortification in *Europe*— The Hopes we have of it being a Surprize upon the *French*, and that the Garrison is but weak, is what we now perswade our selves of— And indeed the Attempts, the *French* have made to thrust Men into the Town, seem to confirm it.

But I beseech you now, Gentlemen, baulk your Enemies at home in one material Point; do not run too fast on with this Siege here in your *Coffee-House* Attacks, and take Horn-works, Half-moons, Tenailes, &c. faster than your Friends there can do it for you— Do not batter down the Works here, before the Cannon are mounted there— Do but think, how odly, how sheepishly, your Friends look here, when they are first told a great many fine Stories; as at *Lisle*, such a Day the Batta-

ries will all fire; such a Day a Hornwork will be attack'd; by such a Day they make no question to be Masters of the Counterscarp, and by so many more to be Masters of the Place; the *French* cannot hold out above so long, and then so long; to day they want Provisions, to morrow Powder, and the like; and after all, every Performance came at Leisure after the Report, and at last you wanted Powder your selves.— And had not the Almighty sent Lieutenant General *Earle* to *Ostend*, to the very Crisis of a Day, you must have rais'd the Siege.

Now pray, Gentlemen, have Patience, give them Time; they will certainly carry this Town, if you will but give them Time; but you must expect, the *French* will defend it bravely, and hold it out as long as they can— It is their Interest to do so, if it be but to wear out and spin the Campaign— Now, be perswaded but to allow Time enough for it, and you shall have it, and you will have it with abundant Satisfaction, when it comes a Week or ten Days sooner than you talk of it; but when it lies on hand longer than you propos'd, it comes